

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 BELGRA 06654 120810Z
ACTION EUR-08

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NSCE-00 INR-05 CIAE-00 PM-03
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R 120634Z SEP 78
FM AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7905
INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

S E C R E T BELGRADE 6654

LIMDIS

EUR FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY VEST; NSC FOR ROBERT HUNTER
FROM AMBASSADOR

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: YO, PFOR
SUBJ: YUGOSLAV OFFICIAL EXPRESSES CONCERN OVER SOVIET
LEADERSHIP

1. AT SEPTEMBER 11 RECEPTION HOSTED BY FEC PRESIDENT
DJURANOVIC, FSFA ASSISTANT SECRETARY KNEZEVIC (WHO
HANDLES YUGOSLAV-SOVIET RELATIONS) PRIVATELY TOLD ME
THAT TITO'S SEPTEMBER 7 COMMENTS IN SLOVENIA (REPORTED
SEPTTEL) WERE DESIGNED BOTH TO ASSURE MOSCOW ABOUT
YUGOSLAV ACTIONS AND INTENTIONS IN THE WAKE OF THE
HUA VISIT, AND TO SIGNAL YUGOSLAV DETERMINATION TO
PURSUE AN INDEPENDENT COURSE AND NOT TO BE PUSHED
AROUND BY ANYONE. HE ALSO TOLD ME HE HOPED WE WOULD
PUT USN SHIPS INTO REPAIR FACILITIES AT TIVAT,
ACKNOWLEDGING THE USEFULNESS OF SUCH A MOVE AS A
LEVER AGAINST THE SOVIETS.

2. LATER AT SAME RECEPTION, KNEZEVIC DREW ME
ASIDE TO EXPRESS GOY'S "SERIOUS" CONCERN ABOUT WHAT IS
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GOING ON IN MOSCOW. BREZHNEV, SAID KNEZEVIC, WAS WEAK;
SUSLOV WAS A PROBLEM BUT NOT THE ONLY ONE. THE
ACTIVITIES OF SOME OF THE SOVIET MILITARY AND KGB HEAD
ANDROPOV WERE ALSO DISCONCERTING, AND BREZHNEV SEEMS
UNABLE TO CONTROL THEM.

3. IN RESPONSE I SUGGESTED THAT IT WOULD PERHAPS BE

WORTHWHILE TO EXCHANGE VIEWS ABOUT WHAT IS GOING ON IN
MOSCOW AMONG THE LEADERSHIP. KNEZEVIC WITHOUT HESITATION
AGREED THAT SUCH AN EXCHANGE WOULD BE MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL.

4. ACTION: REQUEST DEPARTMENT, IF IT CONCURS, PROVIDE
US WITH ANYTHING WE CAN USEFULLY SAY TO YUGOSLAVS
REGARDING OUR ASSESSMENT OF CURRENT SOVIET LEADERSHIP.
APART FROM THE VALUE OF EXPANDING THE US-YUGOSLAV
DIALOGUE, I BELIEVE THAT SUCH AN EXCHANGE MIGHT GIVE
US SOME INSIGHT INTO YUGOSLAV ESTIMATES OF SOVIET
LEADERSHIP -- A SUBJECT ON WHICH THEY ARE USUALLY WELL
INFORMED.

5. IF WE CANNOT BE REASONABLY FORTHCOMING I WOULD
RATHER FORGET THE WHOLE THING.
EAGLEBURGER

SECRET

NNN

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